

New Boston Conservation Commission (NBCC)

Meeting Minutes

April 5, 2012

Members In Attendance: Laura Bernard, Barbara Thomson, Burr Tupper, Rebecca Balke (8:00), Gerry Cornett

Members Absent: Mike DePetrillo, Tom Morgan, Rick Searle, Amy Elkes-Simon

Guests In Attendance: None.

Secretary's Report: The members reviewed the minutes and corrections were noted. Laura moved to accept the March minutes as amended. Gerry seconded the motion. All approved.

Treasurer's Report: Rebecca noted the Conservation Commission account contains \$693,744.81. Open Space has \$375,029.34. There is \$958.61 left in the Railroad Trail CD that could be used for the donor plaque to be installed on the trail.

Rail trail Enhancement Plan Update: Burr reported the following:

- Burr, Lee Brown, Willard Dodge and Town Engineer Kevin Leonard met with NH DES one week ago in Concord where they were told minimal permitting would be required because the Rail trail is in a grandfathered portion of the river. The state is preparing the final paperwork, which is expected to be received next week to start moving forward with the project.
- Burr asked Willard if he had spoken with 4H about the Conservation Commission's offer to pay for improvement of the wooden plank bridge on their property, identified on the B&M Railroad Track Map as "Culvert #423 at 22,277.2", using two precast concrete panels in exchange for a right of way on 4H grounds. Willard said he has discussed this with 4H and they are in favor. He asked Burr to get the legal paperwork ready. Burr met with Town Administrator Peter Flynn for this purpose who will ask Town Attorney Bill Drescher to prepare the paperwork. A preliminary budget was received from Willard and Lee. It notes \$3,800 for replacement of the bridge on 4H property and the trail. Gerry moved to approve \$3,800 for bridge replacement to move forward with the project. Rebecca seconded the motion. All were in favor. Barbara objected because the right of way is not ready but was reassured when Burr said he has seen the estimate paperwork, verbal approval of the agreement has been received from Willard Dodge and the town attorney is preparing the final paperwork.
- Burr, Lee Brown, Willard Dodge and Town Engineer Kevin Leonard walked the trail today, marked areas where fill is needed and noticed a couple trees and roots may need to be removed.
- Burr said that Willard and Lee had done some preliminary cost estimates for Phase 1 he has received from Willard and Lee. This estimate is substantially less than was originally estimated, \$41,000 instead of \$100,000. Townwide yard sale funds will be donated to the Rail trail project. Burr also researched Moose plate

funds from NH DOT and found some of the money raised through sale of these plates has gone towards Rail trail in different areas of the state and hopes some can be used in New Boston. An application for this money is due to the state in October. Burr asked the Conservation Commission to provide \$20-25,000 from Conservation Commission funds (to be reimbursed by grants) to begin the Rail trail project and have work done this summer and fall. The money would be spent only after authorization from the Conservation Commission after reviewing proposals and bids. Gerry moved to set aside \$25,000 from Conservation Commission funds to cover incurred costs as they come in and are approved by the Conservation Commission with three quotes for each item over \$1,000. Rebecca seconded the motion. Rebecca observed that approving the monies before obtaining a grant may exclude those funds from counting as matching funds. All except Barbara were in favor.

Parcel Monitor Reports/New Sign Request: Barbara gave the monitoring reports as follows:

- Boundary marking on Betsy Dodge and Saunders Pasture are complete.
- The Mill Pond Loop Trail is marked and cleared.
- Railroad-Will wait to talk to abutters about placing signs near their lots after the abutter meeting.
- Bog Brook postponed, as the wetlands didn't freeze this winter.
- Skofield west corner-not sure what signage to do here, Barbara will talk to Jon Brooks as he has worked here in the past.
- Saunders Pasture-John Newton Dodge Road, a class 6 road, forms a boundary. There are downed trees here that will be cleared on work crew day.
- SPNHF complained about a violation on the Betsy Dodge Conservation Area, that the abutter may have a shed on the town property. Barbara said that it is not possible to determine if there is a violation because she could not find the iron pins indicated on the surveyor plan that mark the boundaries. Barbara met with the abutter who wants two trees that shade her lot removed. Barbara took photos of the apparent boundaries and asked the abutter to write to the Conservation Commission asking them to take care of the trees. After receiving the letter the Conservation Commission could trim back the trees, but the land will need to be surveyed to determine the bounds before trimming. Barbara moved to hire a surveyor to put bounds at the four corners of abutter's lot. Laura seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Signage Update/Trail Marker Sharing:

- While Barbara and Cyndie Wilson were working on the filing, Barbara found a letter to the 1987 Chairman of the Selectmen Willard Dodge requesting the town to post signs at Ronald Daniels tennis court and the 3 non-contiguous strips of land along the Piscataquog (the Rail Trail). At least four 8.5x11 inch signs will be needed to complete this request. Barbara moved to order signs acknowledging the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from the U.S. Department of the

Interior. Gerry seconded the motion. All were in favor. Gerry will work with Barbara to design and order these signs.

- Cyndie found a dedication brochure for the footbridge on the Rail Trail and she said that Betsy Dodge planned to use that text on a dedication sign thanking donors. This sign will also be designed and ordered. Gerry will design the sign once the kiosks are designed.
- Barbara e-mailed Dan MacDonald asking if a sign should be installed at Bog Brook to the right of the cistern. Dan approved as long as no trail was created. The Conservation Commission also approved a sign in this location.
- Installation of the currently existing Rail trail sign will be postponed for now. Willard Dodge, Burr, Lee Brown and Kevin Leonard discussed placement of signs and kiosks when they walked the area today.
- Barbara proposed ordering 500 additional blue trail marking signs for town forests as the Forestry Committee is interested in using the same signs Gerry has found for the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission decided to order 2100 total, 750 orange and the rest blue.
- Randy Parker has said there are 46 abutters on the Rail trail. These properties could be posted with signs that say “respect private property.”
- Barbara will design “prohibited/allowed” signs and give the design to Gerry to have made.
- Gerry moved to reimburse Barbara \$120 for 6 4x4x8’s and 4 bags of concrete. Rebecca seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Brochure Update: Rebecca spoke to Amy Kisak when she was trying to decide how to designate the Tracking Station on the conservation maps. Amy prepared this and sent it to Rebecca today. Rebecca will meet with Kurt next week to label the map. Parking will only be designated at Lang Station for Rail trail parking, not at the 4H grounds.

SNHPC Open House (Watershed Culvert Assessment): The Conservation Commission will host this open house at the library next week. All area towns are invited. All members are asked to attend. 25 people are expected to attend and the Conservation Commission will provide refreshments.

Gmail/Google Docs: Maralyn was asked to set up a separate e-mail for the Conservation Commission on Google Docs for document sharing as it probably does a better job than the current program. Mail coming in on the current website goes to Laura. There is an internal conservation address and password. The links listed on the Conservation Commission website were fixed and updated today.

Equipment Acquisition: This would be a committee to research electronic and manual tools for the Conservation Commission. They would get a proposal of what is needed that would be discussed and accepted at meetings. Laura, Gerry and Barbara will be on this committee. The equipment could be stored at the Transfer Station or the Highway Garage.

Election of Officers for 2012-13: Gerry moved for the election of the following officers: Burr Chairman, Laura Vice-Chairman, Rebecca Treasurer and Amy Correspondence Secretary. Rebecca seconded the motion. All were in favor. Laura will e-mail Amy to ask her to prepare thank yous on letterhead to Mark Brown and Ed Gilligan. This stationary will be ordered.

Future Meeting Format: There is a new agenda format noting time limits for each discussion topic. Laura will keep track of time limits. Any requests for action should be preceded by a proposal distributed to members one week before the meeting to allow for review. If guests come in to speak they will be scheduled at a certain time on the agenda. Relaxed Roberts' Rules will be used during meetings to make sure every member has a chance to speak. Alternatively Consensus Based Agreement could be used. Burr will prepare a meeting format. "Call to order" and "Adjournment" will be added to the agendas. "Status Reports" will also be added under Old Business.

250th Celebration: Laura was unable to attend the last 250th Committee meeting but has learned that Kerri Kelley was appointed Chairman of the Committee. The Committee will plan activities to take place throughout 2013. The planning meetings will be scheduled for the last Thursday of every month. Laura and Gerry will attend. Burr would like a booth at the Fourth of July celebration to educate residents about Conservation parcels and the Rail trail and how residents can help the Commission. Laura is also on the Fourth of July Committee. The Commission will come up with a slogan/catch phrase.

Kiosk Plans: Rick Searle was unable to attend tonight's meeting to discuss. Burr will meet with him to discuss these plans and ask him to complete his application for reappointment to the Conservation Commission.

Member Primary and Secondary Project/Program Responsibility:

- Adult/youth outreach: The volunteer group will be formally named Conservation Commission Rangers. The Blandings Turtle could be their mascot. Tom will be asked to research ordering hats, shirts and/or tote bags for child volunteers. New Boston Central School Physical Education Teacher Jackie Moulton e-mailed Burr asking how students can help work on trails. Tom will reply and Barbara will prepare a volunteer work schedule.
- Monitoring
- Trail/parcel Maintenance
- Raitrail: The Conservation Commission decided not to tag along the river at this time.
- Master Plan: SNHPC recommendations will be discussed at the open house next week after which this work will be set up.
- Site walks/wetland issues: Laura reviews Planning Board agendas and has noticed some meetings have nothing affecting the Conservation Commission discussed but some meetings do have discussions that affect the Conservation Commission. For those meetings Laura will notify Conservation Commission members and ask someone to attend. Conservation Commission members also

need to attend Site walks as appropriate. The attending member would then submit a report.

Open Discussion:

- The Conservation Commission recently received a letter from Gordon Russell dated March 15, 2012 asking to get prime wetland designation for Great Meadows. The Conservation Commission will reply by asking him to pursue this with the Conservation Commission's blessing.
- Barbara said the law requires the Conservation Commission to maintain a Natural Resources Inventory for the town. An NRI includes wetlands, and under RSA 482-A:15, the town can choose to designate high-quality wetlands greater than 2 acres as "Prime Wetlands" which gives them greater visibility at NH DES when processing Dredge and Fill permits. Barbara will ask David Neiman at Piscataquog Land Conservancy, and/or Jack Munn from Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, and/or Ian McSweeney of the Russell Foundation to find out more information and if this is worth doing.
- SNHPC Watershed Culvert Assessment is beginning soon with grant money.
- Bob Fossbender from Frankestown came in today after noticing a large oak tree that has fallen in the river. He requested the wood that is on the land not in the water. He will be told to contact John McGee at NH Fish and Game for permission.

Gerry moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM. Laura seconded the motion. All approved.

Respectfully submitted, Maralyn Segien

Action Items:

- Hire a surveyor to put bounds at four corners of the Betsy Dodge Area.
- Gerry-Order signs
- Rebecca-Brochure design
- Barbara-Trail Maps
- Maralyn-Set up a separate e-mail for Conservation Commission only on Google Docs for document sharing
- Laura-Research electronic and manual tools for the Conservation Commission
- Amy-Thank yous on letterhead to Mark Brown and Ed Gilligan.
- Burr will prepare a meeting format.
- Laura and Gerry will attend 250th Celebration planning meetings
- Laura-Booth at Fourth of July will be planned
- Gerry, Burr and Rick-Kiosk design
- Tom will be asked to research ordering tats, shirts and/or tote bags for child volunteers and reply to New Boston Central School Physical Education Teacher Jackie Moulton. Barbara will prepare a work schedule for student volunteers.
- TBD-Master Plan
- Laura-Planning Board and Sitewalk attendance as needed

- Amy-Reply to Gordon Russell
- Barbara-investigate Prime Wetlands designation cost/benefits